

Focaccia with Olives and Rosemary

This recipe was inspired by one from olive oil expert Lidia Colavita. You can make a meal around the bread by offering it as an accompaniment to bean soup.

Ingredients:

2 cups warm water (105°F; to 115°F;)
2 teaspoons dry yeast
4 1/2 cups (about) all purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt

3 tablespoons olive oil
24 black or green brine-cured olives (such as Kalamata or Greek), pitted, halved
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary or 1 1/2 teaspoons dried

Directions:

Place 2 cups warm water in large bowl. Sprinkle dry yeast over; stir with fork. Let stand until yeast dissolves, about 10 minutes.

Add 4 1/4 cups flour and salt to yeast mixture and stir to blend well (dough will be sticky). Knead dough on floured surface until smooth and elastic, adding more flour by tablespoonfuls if dough is sticky, about 10 minutes. Form dough into ball. Oil large bowl; add dough, turning to coat. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in warm area until doubled, about 1 1/2 hours. Punch down dough; knead into ball and return to same bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in warm area until doubled, about 45 minutes or less

Coat 15x10-inch baking sheet with 1 tablespoon oil. Punch down dough. Transfer to prepared sheet. Using fingertips, press out dough to 13x10-inch rectangle. Let dough rest 10 minutes. Drizzle 2 tablespoons oil over dough. Sprinkle olives and chopped rosemary evenly over. Let dough rise uncovered in warm area until puffy, about 25 minutes.

Preheat oven to 475°F. Press fingertips all over dough, forming indentations. Bake bread until brown and crusty, about 20 minutes. Serve bread warm or at room temperature.

